

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

JUN 09 2005

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Lyons High School

Other name/site number Lyons Middle School

2. Location

Street & number 401 S. Douglas Avenue ☐ not for publication

City or town Lyons ☐ vicinity

State Kansas Code KS County Rice Code 159 Zip code 67554

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Christy Davis 3/10/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official /Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ☐ removed from the National Register
- ☐ other, (explain:)

Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Lyons High School, Rice County, Kansas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 1 | 0 | total |

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historic Kansas Public Schools

Number of contributing resources previously listed on the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter Categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Concrete

Walls: Brick

Roof: Asphalt

Other: Stone detailing

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Lyons High School, Rice County, Kansas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1930 - 1955

Significant Dates

1930

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

MANN & CO., Architect; A. HELWIG & SONS, Builder

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ Previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
- # _____

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record # _____

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

11. Form Prepared By

Additional Documentation

Property Owner

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Lyons High School, Rice County, Kansas

Narrative Description

The new high school in Lyons was under construction in October of 1929 at the time of the stock market crash. Designed by Mann and Company, Architects and Engineers of Hutchinson, the Art Deco building was completed at a cost of \$189,529, and opened in the fall of 1930. The 2-1/2 story tan brick building reflected an emerging architectural trend – the Modern Movement. The building form is asymmetrical with the auditorium projecting from the south end of the front (east) facade. Located off-center, between the auditorium and classroom wing, the main entrance is defined by a squat, stepped square tower with ornate carved stone. A projecting bay anchors the north end of the front facade. Sets of four 6/6 double hung windows define the classroom wing, in contrast to full-height, two-story windows on the auditorium. Detailed ornamentation includes patterned brick, projecting brick piers with chevron stone caps, and the ornate carved stone at the entrance. Characteristics including the building form, with a flat roof and unadorned parapet and stepped tower at the entrance, and brick and stone detailing, exemplify the Art Deco style.

The present school site has been home to four school buildings. Following the construction of two grade schools around 1880, the city's first high school was constructed on the current site in 1881 – Central School, located north of the current school. Constructed of soft local brick, the school deteriorated and was replaced by a new structure on the same site in 1905. The new high school was built in 1930, south of Central School. In 1956, Central Grade School was built, southwest of the original school on the same site. The old Central School was used as the Junior High until a new high school was constructed in 1969. At that time, the Junior High moved into the 1930 building. The old Central School building was in the process of being demolished when it caught fire and burned to the ground in 1973. The 1930 High School now serves as Lyons Middle School. Central Elementary is located southwest of the high school, connected to the Middle School by a rear gymnasium in 2002.

The high school faces east, fronting S. Douglas Avenue. Central Grade School faces south, fronting W. Lincoln Street. The site is L shaped, bordered by Douglas on the east, Lyons on the north, and Lincoln on the south. The football field is located northwest of the school. Parking is provided on the north and south sides of the school. A grass lawn is located on the south side of the high school, the former location of the old Central School. The original date stone has been set in a brick panel off the northeast corner of the existing school. The area is landscaped with shrubs and a flag pole is in place, forming a small plaza. Concrete sidewalks run along the perimeter of the south and east sides of the site, with a walk extending to the main building entrance on the east facade. Secondary entrances are located on the north and south sides of the school.

The front (east) facade is asymmetrical, with three sections, distinguished by use. The north section of the east facade is a classroom wing, subdivided into five equal bays. This wing is defined by projecting twin piers between sets of four windows (originally), and horizontal stone bands that form the sill of lower windows and the lintel of upper windows. The upper stone band is integral with the chevron caps on the brick piers. There is a projecting bay on the north end of the building, distinguished from other classroom bays by sets of three versus four windows. Projecting, curved scuppers are located on the corners of the bay, and square stone panels above the lintel are topped by a carved medallion at the coping band. Narrow single windows are located on the north and south sides of the projecting bay.

The south section of the east facade is the auditorium, which projects from the main building facade. Projecting brick piers subdivide the east facade of the auditorium into four bays. The two center bays had full-height windows. Located at the south end of the auditorium, the stage projects from the facade and rises above the roof line. The north bay had a set of windows on each floor, the upper floor was a tripartite window with arched brick lintel.

Located between the auditorium and classroom wing, the middle section of the east facade is the main building entrance. The entry is two bays wide, comprised of a square tower and adjoining one-story bay that overlaps the south bay of the classroom wing. The tower is the main entrance and the adjoining bay is the school office, each bay projects from the facade. This section of the building is further distinguished by the use of smooth, ashlar stone, contrasting with the brick building. Detailing on the office bay includes an ornamental carved band below the coping and a curved scupper on the north corner.

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The square entry tower is stepped and rises above the roofline. The ground floor of the tower is stone, with carved detailing over the arched doorway. The stone extends around two single upper windows and forms a checkerboard pattern with the brick above the windows. A stone pier is located on the north end of the tower, topped by a chevron, similar to the brick piers on the rest of the building. A short stone wall extends from the base of the pier, framing the sidewalk in front of the entry. The entrance was a set of three multi-light wood paneled doors with three multi-light arched transoms. "High School" is inscribed over the arched entry.

The primary exterior alteration is the installation of replacement doors and windows. Contemporary metal framed glass doors with single pane transoms have been installed. Replacement windows are two styles – three and six pane windows with opaque panels in the top pane (s). Auditorium windows have been filled in with opaque panels and downsized with opaque panels to accommodate smaller windows. Window air conditioning units are in place at some window openings. There is significant deterioration in the carved stone at the main entrance. The original inscription was deteriorated and recently covered by a new sign - "Lyons Middle School."

The main building is generally a rectangular form with a gymnasium projecting from the rear to form a "T" shaped plan. The gym is connected to the main building by a corridor with entrances on the north and south sides, providing outside access to the gymnasium. The gymnasium is a rectangular form with shallow gable roof with a parapet capped by stone coping. Internal scuppers with cast iron downspouts are in place around the perimeter of the gymnasium.

The north facade of the main building is a simple rectangular form with a central entry, framed by projecting twin piers on each end of the building. Original entrances on the ground floor and second floor are extant; the second floor is accessed by a steel fire escape. The upper entry is a single door flanked by sidelights, a multi-light over a single wood panel door and three multi-light transoms. The ground level entrance was a pair of multi-light over single panel wood doors with a multi-light transom. The original wrought iron light fixture is extant but the original amber glass globe is missing. Stone quoining frames the ground level entry. A set of three windows on the ground floor, east of the central door are the only windows on the north facade of the main building. Detailing includes a horizontal stone band that extends between the stone chevron caps on the brick piers and square stone panels that form a checkerboard patterns on each side and above the central entry. Extending far above the roofline, a square, tall brick chimney is located near the northwest corner of the main building.

The north and south sides of the gymnasium are comprised of five equal bays divided by projecting brick piers. Each bay had a set of three 6/6 double hung windows per floor. These windows have been removed and the openings filled in. Upper windows have been filled in with opaque panels while the ground level windows have been filled in with brick. Repeated problems with intruders gaining access through the lower windows (into the locker room) led to the decision to infill the original openings. A small one-story projecting bay on the east end of the gymnasium leads to the corridor that connects the gym to the main school building. The east facade of the gym has the central corridor flanked by two single windows on the ground floor. There were two single windows on the ends of the upper floor that have been filled in. First floor windows have been replaced with 1/1 double hung aluminum windows. The gym is connected to the main building by a corridor that extends from the main building entrance. Entrances are located on the north and south sides of the corridor. The entrances were a pair of multi-light over single wood panel doors with a five pane transom, flanked by single multi-pane windows. The door surround is stone quoining with a carved stone medallion at the coping. The doors and windows have been replaced. The rear of the gym has two single door exits and a single window on each end of the upper level.

Constructed in 1956, at the same time that Central Grade School was built southwest of the high school, a rear addition provided seating on the west side of the gym and a new industrial arts shop. In 2002, a new gymnasium was constructed connecting Central Grade School to the addition on the rear of the high school. The 1956 addition is blond brick with horizontal steel windows (extant). The 2002 rear gymnasium is also brick, connected to the high school by a corridor/breezeway with metal windows and a gable, metal roof.

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The west side of the main high school building is similar to the east elevation of the classroom wing. The north section generally has sets of four windows in each bay while the south section has pairs of two windows. Basement access to the boiler room is provided by a concrete area well on the north side of the corridor to the gym. The original multi-pane steel basement windows are extant in this area. The west facade of the main building is unaltered with the exception of replacement windows.

The east and west halves of the south elevation are distinguished by use, the east half being the rear of the auditorium. Constructed as the manual training shop, the west half of the facade was originally a symmetrical composition with three bays with a pair of 6/6 double-hung windows on each floor and an overhead garage door on the ground floor of the center bay. Following the rear shop addition in the 1950s, this area was remodeled. A pair of windows has been installed in the center bay where the garage door was originally located. Additionally, exterior doors have been installed on the east bay of the west half of the south facade. A metal fire escape was installed to provide a second means of egress from the 2nd floor. Cast-iron bumper guards are extant, delineating the original garage door opening. The rear of the auditorium originally had two upper windows, and a single door on each end of the bay. The east half of the south elevation is framed by projecting brick piers and square stone panels form a checkerboard pattern in the center of the upper portion of the facade. The window openings and west door have been filled in. A plain metal door is in place at the east stage door.

An article in the August 13th, 1930 *Lyons Daily News*, announced that the new high school building would be ready for use that fall, noting that the new structure will afford much-needed space to allow the addition and re-establishment of courses not previously available due to the over-crowded conditions at the former high school (serving grades 1-12). Special spaces in the new school include an auditorium, accessible inside the front door of school, and with additional seating in a 2nd floor balcony. The gymnasium, a separate building attached to the main school by a corridor, has locker rooms under the bleachers on each side of the gym. A well-lighted and well-ventilated manual training room had an overhead door on the south, to bring an automobile in for mechanics classes. The manual training and domestic science rooms were located on the west side of the north wing and the drafting and commercial departments in the same hallway on the lower floor. The mathematics, English, Latin, science, physics, chemistry and social science rooms were located on the 2nd floor. The library is located in the southwest corner of the building on the second floor, over the manual training room. Special features included trophy cases in the corridors and tile surrounds around the drinking fountains under the main staircase, donated by the graduating classes of 1929 and 1930.

The tile fountain surrounds appear to be Batchelder tile, designed by Ernest Allen Batchelder (1875-1957). A leading designer of the American arts and crafts movement, Batchelder opened his tile company in Pasadena, California in 1909. He earned a gold medal at the 1915 San Diego Exposition and following his early success, moved his factory to Los Angeles in 1916. His tile work was almost entirely brown and gold tones, with blue glaze rubbed over indentions in the designs. His designs included a wide array of subjects including vines, flowers, Viking ships and animals. The company was forced out of business by the Depression in 1932. A number of Wichita schools, including Metro-Meridian High School, East High School and Stanley Elementary, have Batchelder tile fountain surrounds. The color and design of the tiles in the Lyons High School are typical of Batchelder tile.

The plan form of the main building is rectangular with a "T" shaped corridor. The south side of the building was the auditorium, with the manual training shop on the ground floor and library on the second floor. The north side of the building is the classroom wing. The main corridor is off-center, extending from the main entry on the east to the gymnasium in the rear. The wide corridor forms an entry foyer inside the main (east) doors with access to the auditorium on the south and the office on the north. Across the north/south corridor, the main corridor extends between a grand split staircase, to the gymnasium in the rear. Originally, there were secondary entrances on the north end of the classroom wing and the north and south sides of the corridor to the gymnasium. An entrance has been added at the south end of the north/south corridor, in the original manual training shop. The rear gymnasium forms a "T" shaped plan with the main school building.

There have been some interior modifications which slightly altered the corridor configuration. As previously noted, the manual training shop was remodeled into classrooms, and the north/south corridor was extended to the south facade. However, the basic "T" configuration of the corridor has been maintained. The foyer and corridor is a spacious, character-

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defining space with arched openings at the intersection with the north/south corridor, and terrazzo floors with a marble base. There is an ornamental plaster cornice in the entry foyer and the original transom windows are extant. The split, marble staircase has original built-in trophy cases and cast-iron railings. Original tile fountain surrounds are also extant beneath the staircase.

Significant interior features and finishes are extant. Plaster walls are in place throughout and plaster ceilings still exposed in some areas including the main foyer, staircase, and select other locations. The plaster walls had a stamped brick finish on the lower four feet, now covered by carpet wainscoting in most areas. The corners of the walls are beveled and that detail has been retained, even with the carpet wainscoting. The original stamped surface is in place in select locations. Suspended ceilings have been installed in the north/south corridors and in most classrooms. Original floors are in place in most areas, terrazzo in the corridors, concrete in the locker rooms, and wood in most classrooms. Carpet and vinyl tile has been installed over the wood in most classrooms. Base boards vary based on location, and include marble, concrete, wood, and vinyl.

The original interior doors were generally three light flush wood doors, set in recessed entrances to each classroom. This configuration and the original doors are in place in most areas. Minor changes in room configurations have required the moving and addition of new doors in a few locations. Those doors are easily distinguished because they are flush with the corridor, not recessed like the original doors. Some classrooms such as the domestic science (now home economics) and science room retain their original location and original built-in tables and cabinets. The library also retains its original location in the southwest corner of the second floor. Although the windows have been replaced, the original glazed brick sills are intact throughout. Cast-iron radiators are also in place. Florescent light fixtures have been installed throughout the building. The only extant original light fixture is over the north exterior door.

In addition to the conversion of the manual training shop to classrooms, a major interior alteration was the conversion of the auditorium to a band room and technology classroom. The balcony was also enclosed and is used for storage and mechanical space. These changes were made because the auditorium was too small to accommodate the entire student body and additional classroom space was needed. The basement dressing room spaces (under the auditorium) are intact with the original multi-paned steel windows. Original restrooms, located on each side of the main stairway, have been remodeled to meet accessibility standards.

The original gymnasium is intact at the rear of the school and the original ticket window is in place at the east entrance to the gym. The seats have been replaced on the north and south sides of the gym but the original configuration is intact. The gym was expanded with the addition of bleacher seating on the west end. The rear addition was completed in conjunction with the construction of Central Grade School in 1956. Called the High School shop addition, the expansion was designed by English, Miller & Hockett of Hutchinson. Hahner-Foreman-Cale, Inc. was the general contractor. In addition to the west bleachers in the gym, the addition included a new industrial arts shop. The area was later used as the band room and is now the school cafeteria on the south, and the sixth grade classrooms on the north. The addition is concrete block with brick wainscoting and quarry tile flooring. In 2002, a new gymnasium was constructed on the west end of the former addition. The new gym is located on the north side of Central Elementary and connected to the high school by an enclosed corridor/breezeway at the west side of the cafeteria.

The original construction documents are available from the architect, Mann & Co., of Hutchinson; select sheets are provided at the end of the nomination (Additional Documentation).

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Narrative Statement of Significance

Built in 1930, Lyons High School is significant under Criterion A in the area of Education as Lyons' public high school. The building is also significant under Criterion C as an Art Deco structure representative of the emergence of the Modern Movement in Architecture. The school is also significant architecturally as a representative work of the prominent Hutchinson architectural and engineering firm, Mann and Company, who continue in business today; after their establishment in 1924. Lyons High School is an example of the Town High School property type as defined in the multiple property documentation form, *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*. The building meets the registration requirements and is significant on a state and local level. The period of significance is 1930-1955 representing the date of construction spanning to the fifty year threshold for eligible properties. The property is significant as the first school in the community, built to function solely as a high school (grades 9-12). The school remains in use as Lyons Middle School. The structure is a traditional example of early modern schools in which the building's form and ornamentation reflect a departure from the simple red brick boxes, characteristic of the Progressive Era.

The City of Lyons

Lyons is located in the center of Rice County. Rice County is in the center of southern Kansas, southwest of Salina and northwest of Wichita. The county was established in 1871. In December of 1870, the Atlanta Town Company built a hotel that was later given to the county for a courthouse. The Santa Fe Trail formed the main street of the new town, named Atlanta and located a mile and a half south of the current city of Lyons. The town site was selected in anticipation of a railroad running from Salina to Raymond, which was a major shipping post for cattle (due to the proximity to the Santa Fe Trail). The railroad never materialized and the Santa Fe Trail moved to the south, following the Arkansas River.

Other towns in the county, namely Peace (now Sterling), Raymond, and Nickerson (now part of Reno County), were all located on the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe rail line, and vying to be the permanent location on the county seat. In 1876, a decision was made to move the county seat to the center of the county and the town of Lyons was established (absorbing the town of Atlanta). The land where Lyons is situated was originally a farm that was owned by Mr. Williston, who sold later sold it to Mr. Truman Lyon. Lyon sold town lots and donated ground for the first public school. The town was named for Mr. Lyon.

Lyons was incorporated as a third class city four years later, in 1880. By 1882, Lyons had a population of 900. It was a thriving community with multiple dry good, drug, grocery, hardware, clothing, millinery and general stores. The town also had blacksmiths, livery stables, a grain dealer, a flour mill, two banks, and two hotels.

Mr. Lyon also donated land for the courthouse. The first courthouse was built in Lyons in 1876, immediately following its selection as the county seat. The second courthouse was built in 1910. The town was laid out with a public square around the courthouse.

Today, Lyons is a thriving community of just over 3600 population. It is the county seat of Rice County, with a county population of over 10,000. Adjacent counties are Ellsworth on the north, McPherson on the east, Reno on the south, and Barton on the west. There are number of other communities in the county including Chase and Raymond on the west, Sterling on the south, and Little River on the east. There are four unified school districts in the county: No. 405-Lyons, No. 444-Little River, No., 401-Chase/Raymond, and No. 376-Sterling.

The Schools of Lyons

The first school building in the county was erected in Atlanta in 1871. The following year, there were 293 persons of school age in the county and nine organized school districts. Two grade schools (North and East) were constructed in Lyons around 1880. Lyons built its first high school after its incorporation as a city. The first school to offer high school instruction was opened in 1881 and named Central School. The school was located on the site of the existing Middle School, north of the current building. Central School provided the city's third grade school, a three-year high school, and a chart room, similar to kindergarten.

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Given the lack of timber in the area, a brick plant was established shortly after the town was founded. However, the local brick was soft and deteriorated quickly when exposed to the elements. The early schools, built of the soft, local brick, lasted only twenty-five years. In 1904, the Central School was condemned and classes were moved to various locations throughout the city. The school building was razed and a new high school constructed. The new Central School opened in 1906, and offered a four-year high school. Park School was built around the same time, to replace the original East Grade School. The growing community soon found itself in need of additional school facilities. Park school was expanded in 1911-12. In 1916, a gymnasium and auditorium were added to the high school and a new North Grade School was constructed. Prior to that time basketball had been played on an outdoor court. In the 1920's, it became evident that the town needed a new, modern high school. The existing middle school was constructed as a high school; it opened in 1930, located on the south side of Central School. Following the opening of the high school, Central School served grades 1-8. The new high school alleviated crowding at all schools and the four schools (Park, North, and Central Grade Schools, and the high school) served the community's educational needs for the next twenty years. Following WWII, residential areas developed in the southern part of Lyons. South Grade School was designed by the Topeka firm of Williamson-Loebsack, and opened in 1951 to serve children in the southeast part of town. In 1956, Central Grade School was designed by English, Miller and Hockett of Hutchinson, who designed the addition to the high school at the same time. Central Grade School is located southwest of the 1930 high school. With the opening of Central Grade School, the old Central School, located north of the high school, became the junior high. North Grade School was closed in 1957, the building later sold to the City for storage.

A new high school was built on the southern edge of town in 1969. Following its completion, the old high school became the junior high. At that time, the old Central School, which had served the community for over sixty years, was abandoned. A decision was made to demolish the building and salvage the brick to use in the construction of a new administrative office for the school district. However, during the dismantling, the old school caught fire and was destroyed. In 1973, a new Park Grade School was built on the same site as the old Park school. In 1979, the junior high was converted to a middle school with the addition of sixth grade classes. South Grade School was later closed and now serves as the district offices. Today, the schools of Lyons include Park (1973) and Central (1951) Elementary Schools which serve grades K-5, Lyons Middle School (the 1930 high school) serving grade4s 6-8, and Lyons High School (1969) serving grades 9-12.

Summary

Lyons High School is historically significant under National Register Criterion A as a historic public school that has served the community for nearly seventy-five years. The school has contributed to the growth and development of the city of Lyons. The 1930 structure was the first school facility in the community, built to serve specifically as a high school. It was also the first Lyons school to reflect a modern architectural style – Art Deco. It is the only remaining pre-WWII school in Lyons. Built as a high school, the school was converted to a junior high in 1969 following the construction of a new high school on the south edge of town. In 1979, 6th grade was added to the school, and it continues operation as Lyons Middle School today. The building is representative of the Town High School property type, serving as the only high school (later junior high/middle school) for the entire city of Lyons, a distinguishing characteristic of the property type.

The school is also significant under Criterion C as an example of an early Modern Movement school, representative of the Art Deco style. The school is a classic example of the transition from the Progressive Era to the Modern Movement in school design, reflected in both plan form and ornamentation. It embodies standard characteristics of the Modern Movement including an asymmetrical plan and front facade, an entry defined by a short, stepped tower, and a flat roof with unadorned parapet. The ornamentation is detailed and well-designed yet simplistic. The building form with the square tower at the entrance, the vertical piers, and repeated use of the chevron detail, exemplify the Art Deco style. Lyons High School is also significant as a representative of the work of Hutchinson architectural firm, Mann & Company, who designed hundreds of schools in the state of Kansas.

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Lyons High School, Rice County, Kansas**

The school has undergone modifications including the conversion of the original manual training shop and auditorium to classroom space and the extension of the north/south corridor to the south end of the building (through the original shop). "Modernization" of interior finishes has included carpet floor coverings and wainscoting, suspended ceilings, and florescent light fixtures.

Additionally, there have been two major additions on the rear of the original building. The gym was expanded with bleachers on the west side and an industrial arts shop was added in 1956. In 2002, a new gymnasium was constructed which connects Central Grade School (1956) to the high school. Both additions are visible only from secondary facades and have little impact on the appearance of the original building. Interior modifications did result in the loss of the original auditorium and a minor alteration in the corridor configuration. However, the basic "T" corridor configuration, entry foyer, main staircase, classroom wing, and original gymnasium are all intact and effectively portray the 1930 design. In spite of the alterations, the interior retains a high degree of integrity.

The only significant exterior alteration is the installation of replacement windows and doors and the infilling of some original window openings on the auditorium and gymnasium. The replacement windows and doors do not match the style of the original windows and although this does adversely affect the historic character of the building, it does not do so to a sufficient degree so as to render the property ineligible for listing. Because the front of the building retains a high degree of integrity, with no significant alterations other than the windows and doors, and because the original pattern of window and door openings is clearly visible, even where openings have been filled in, the building still portrays the character of the original design.

The school retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship and association. It retains its original form as viewed from the primary facade, its original roof form, materials, pattern of window, and door openings, and basic interior configuration. Lyons High School is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under the multiple property documentation form, *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*, as a representative of the property type-Town High School.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
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Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Lyons High School, Rice County, Kansas

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"Batchelder Tile." Biographical data and images of Batchelder tile were accessed on-line at www.tilenut.com/Batchelder

Cutler, William C. "Rice County," [History of the State of Kansas](#) (first published by A.T. Andreas, Chicago, 1883).
Accessed on-line at www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/rice

School Clipping File at the Coronado Quivira Museum in Lyons provided historic views (photos and postcards) of early Lyons' schools, and the following:

"Lyons has hop-scotch school history," article in [Lyons Daily News](#). c.1971 (no date).

"Mrs. Roy Kinzie's Article Written for Woman's Club Describes Early Day Lyons (1938), republished in [Lyons Daily News](#), no date.

Open House Program for Central Elementary, Gymnasium Expansion and Shop Addition. February 17, 1957.

[Lyons Daily News](#). 7 September, 1915; 3 April, 1916; 13 August, 1930; 29 November, 1938; 15 February, 1957; 28 November, 1973; and 15, 16, and 20, December, 1988

Spencer, Brenda R. *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*, National Register Multiple Property Nomination, 2004.

Spencer, Brenda R. Lyons High School Reconnaissance Inventory Form, May, 2004.

The original construction drawings were obtained from Mann and Company, architects and engineers in Hutchinson.

The majority of information on the town of Lyons and schools in the community was provided by Shirley Sheridan at the Coronado Quivira Museum in Lyons.

Additional information was provided by Lyons Middle School and the USD 404 main office.

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description – Lots 1-16 Block J and Lots 1-5, 15-16, and North 15' of Lot 14 and West 3' of Lot 6 in Block K and adjacent vacated alley in Block K, Lyons 2nd Addition; and all Blocks 21 and 22 in Lyons 3rd Addition; and vacated Washington Street from the West line of Douglas Avenue to the East line of street left of Santa Fe Railroad right of way and vacated St. John Avenue from South line of Lyon Street to North line of vacated Washington Street.

Boundary Justification – The site is comprised of the school building and grounds and is clearly defined by geographic features. The site includes a city block, set aside for the construction of a school in 1880 and continuing in that function since.

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Historic Public Schools of Kansas
Lyons High School, Rice County, Kansas

Additional Documentation

Maps

USGS map attached

Figure 1 – Aerial Photograph of Site

Historic Views

Figure 2 – Historic Views of Lyons School Buildings

Figure 3 – Plan and Elevation Drawings from the Original Design Documents

Photographs

Photos were taken by Brenda Spencer August 17, 2004. KSHS holds the original negatives.

| # | Description of View [direction of camera] |
|----|--|
| 1 | North end of front (east) facade [west] |
| 2 | South end of front (east) facade [west] |
| 3 | North facade of original school [south] |
| 4 | Gymnasium entrance on north side of corridor connecting gym to main school [south] |
| 5 | Central Elementary School (1956), located on same site, southwest of high school [north] |
| 6 | 1956 shop addition (now cafeteria) and gym expansion on southwest corner of original gymnasium [northeast] Breezeway/corridor on left is connection to 2002 gymnasium that connects high school to Central Elementary |
| 7 | South facade of main school building (originally, stage entry at rear of auditorium & manual shop) [northeast] |
| 8 | Original multi-pane steel basement window extant in dressing room on east (front) facade [northwest] |
| 9 | Exterior view of school, across the street, northeast of building [southwest] |
| 10 | Main corridor inside front entrance [east] |
| 11 | Detail of plaster cornice in entry foyer [southeast] |
| 12 | Terrazzo floor with marble base in main corridor [east] |
| 13 | Main corridor looking toward rear gym [west] |
| 14 | Detail of Batchelder tile fountain surround [north] |
| 15 | North/South corridor [north] |
| 16 | Original interior door/recessed doorway [west] |
| 17 | Main stairway, from landing between first and second floors [southeast] |
| 18 | Entrance to balcony from second floor corridor [northeast] |
| 19 | Small classroom with original plaster ceilings, east side of second floor [southeast] |
| 20 | Science classroom on west side of second floor [north] |
| 21 | Original ticket window in foyer to gymnasium [southwest] |
| 22 | Original rear gymnasium [northwest] |